

Fort Wayne
Detroit, Michigan
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~~PHOTOGRAPHS~~
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District No. 27

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

Historic American Buildings Survey
Branson V. Gamber, District Officer
3500 Union Guardian Building, Detroit, Michigan

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

District #27 - 4-5-6

April 28, 1934.

FORT WAYNE

DETROIT - MICHIGAN

Information from

Colonel Russell C. Langdon, - 2nd. Infantry - U.S.A.

Fort Wayne is located at the foot of Livernois Avenue, fronting on the Detroit River, which at this point is about a mile wide to the Canadian shore.

The underlying reason for thus locating Fort Wayne has never been fully explained, even by army experts, because the fort as such, was never used for military purposes, except for housing troops. The moat around the fort proper, was never filled with water; in fact, no provision for filling it has ever been indicated by, or on any of, the engineering drawings.

The original fort, walls, revetments, bastions, demi-lune were designed and built under the supervision of Lieut. (later General) Montgomery C. Meigs; the present Commanding Officer is Colonel Russell C. Langdon, Second Infantry, U.S.A.

The following is a chronological summary of the history of Fort Wayne:

1841 - Fort Wayne was authorized, and \$50,000 appropriated by Congress for a site and buildings.

1842 - Site selected on Detroit River as above, and twenty-three acres acquired by the Government to erect fort.

1843 - Work on fort walls and revetments begun.

1844 - Forty-four (44) additional acres purchased.

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1845 - Sally-ports and demi-lune facing the river completed; large part of fort walls, including gun emplacements, still uncompleted. See date on stone over entrance to East Port.

1846 - Entire fort proper (no buildings) completed, including moat and approaches.

1847 - Old Barracks (present N.C.O. quarters) authorized. Shot furnaces (since demolished) started.

1848 - Cornerstone of old Barracks laid; Powder House started.

1849 - Barracks (and other small buildings in fort, since demolished) completed. Kitchens and bath houses were separated from barracks proper.

1851 - Entire fort, including all masonry, moat, tunnels and underground gun emplacements, completed except for some circular gun irons in bastions.

The fort was not actually occupied by the Army until 1866. The Fort Wayne Post gradually acquired more land and grew to its present size of 90.03 acres. After completion of fort proper, the development of the post consisted in buildings of all kinds - officers quarters, company houses, hospital, shops, recreation building, commissary, guard house, garage, stables, etc. etc., the building being continued as late as 1931. A large amount of detailed information and data on Fort Wayne is available at the office of B. Frank Emery, #1209 Washington Boulevard, Detroit. A complete official record of all buildings on the post is on file in the office of the Quartermaster at the fort. This gives in detail, name of each building, date of erection, size, material and cost. The files, under direction of Col. Langdon, have been brought fully to date and are complete.

The fort was built entirely from designs by engineers in the U.S. War Department and under their supervision.

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SALLY-PORTS, Two in Number (#27 - 4)

Tunnels with sharp angle turn, stone face on Fort ends; stone and brick at exterior ends. Semi-circular brick arches, with brick intersections and penetrations. Alignment of brick jointing and masonry execution is perfect. Oak plank gates at both ends of tunnels, six inches thick, hung on heavy wrought iron strap hinges.

OLD BARRACKS, (#27 - 5)

All walls random ashlar stone; cross walls brick; kitchen and porch extension built fourteen years later. Floor heavy beam construction, supported by cast iron columns and girders at first floor, - no basement. Third floor girders supported from 1-3/4" king bolts suspended from truss centers, through attic and third stories. Windows 1-3/4" double hung; gun slots north and south elevations, all stone; doors, 1-3/4" panelled; all trim pine. Five entrance halls, with complete steel plate stairs, very easy risers and treads, supported between brick walls. On exterior, cornice, belt courses and trim are of dressed stone; all dentils are over sized brick; slate roof throughout - large brick chimneys.

Building is not in very good state of repair, Due to failure of roof construction, in turn caused by too heavy load on trusses, attempts to rectify difficulty have resulted in considerable distortion and cracks. No particular effort is made to keep the building in good condition.

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FORT WAYNE

DETROIT - MICHIGAN

POWDER HOUSE (#27 - 6)

All walls of random stone ashlar, same as barracks, only larger, and three feet thick; house built into embankment, on three sides. Stone retaining wall, separated from house walls by three foot space, and heavy stone stays or separators. Shingle roof over ordinary roof construction, underwhich the powder magazine is protected by a high semi-circular brick vault. One large oak door, no windows, but several ventilating grilles, two zinc lightning conductors; cement floor.

Frank Eurich, Jr.

H.A.B.S. - Member.

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